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1. Title

Min, H. L., & Wah, L. L. (2011). Teaching of Speech, Language and Communication Skills for Young Children with Sever Autism Spectrum Disorders: What Do Educators Need to Know. *New Horizons in Education*, 59(3), 16-27.

2.

The research is to provide suggestions to educators both in general and special education programs about the perspectives of speech and language intervention. It emphasizes early intervention for young children with severe ASD. Their language deficit leads to other language-related problems; as a result they are not able to recognize spoken words which will make it difficult for them to understand others. A case study is with a four-year-old Malaysian girl with ASD. The assessments used in the research are Preschool Language Scale – Fourth edition (PSL-4) and Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamental – Revised (CESF-R). The intervention was done every week for 45 minutes, 20 sessions in total. The activities are turn-taking activities, object-picture matching, request by using a picture card, follow one-step commands, and imitate vocalizations. She showed a significant progress in performing turn-taking tasks and other activities. The results are shown in percentage in a table. However, she did not achieve targeted language production. Overall, her progress in the training offers positive exemplar that speech and language intervention could help children with ASD to develop communicative ability. The research gives implication that children with ASD need to be given opportunities to communicate in a different way in collaboration with pictures and objects along with spoken directions.

3.

A lot of children are being diagnosed with ASD, and the number is increasing. Therefore, educators need to know how to help students with ASD in early age, making successful inclusion of these students. To make that happen, their language and communication skills should be enhanced in their early age.

4.

There are five intervention programs to help the student with ASD develop language and communication skills:

- 1) **turn-taking**: The child participate in activities with back-and-forth interactions such as rolling a ball to each other, taking turns putting puzzle pieces on the board, etc.
- 2) **object-picture matching**: It involves making symbolic associations by matching objects with an array of two to three pictures.
- 3) **request by using a picture card**: The child requests her most desired things by using the representing picture cards.
- 4) **follow one-step commands**: This is a basic task of language understanding training.
- and 5) **imitate vocalizations**: The child is prompted to imitate vocalizations of vowel sounds, /a/, /i/ and /u/.

5.

The child in the case study shows significant progress in the first four intervention programs. She begins about 10~20% achievement, but after the 20-session program, she achieves about 70~90% of the four interventions. But in the last intervention program, she barely shows any progress. So she is likely to have language processing and production deficits. The research suggests that a set of visual cards or pictures could encourage students with ASD to learn how to express and communicate their thoughts as a compensatory strategy. With evidence-based and individualized teaching practices, students with ASD can get help to facilitate communication strategies, which promotes a greater inclusion of these students in general education settings.

6.

“Little drops make an ocean.” The research article reminds me of this phrase. I think I have neglected the value of little things repeated day in and day out. Simple daily activities can promote language development. The important part of this activity is the teacher’s sensitivity and persistence. I could have engaged my student with ASD in more active communication at every moment. I could make an excuse that I did not know much about ASD. From now on, neither can I, nor should I. There were a lot of opportunities that I could do something with my student. It did not have to be great activities.

7.

Even if I did not meet students with ASD, I think I can apply the principles behind the research to any students who might be struggling with language and communication skills, let alone students with mild/severe ASD. Here are the principles I’ve drawn from the research about teaching students with ASD language and communication skills: simplicity, consistency, and clarity. Students with ASD are likely to encounter many obstacles when communicating to people and their mental processing can be hindered as the severity of ASD increases. Therefore, if they are to understand what others tell them, they should be exposed to day-to-day communicative environment. It is also necessary to help them to express their ideas as best as they could. I will plan adaptable activities for students with ASD to foster their communication skills. In the light of communication as an interactive mode, I will adopt interactive activities based on the level of students.